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Letter dated 30 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 30 September 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plumer, representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 30 September 1997 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 19 September 1997 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations which contains allegations regarding "violations of the airspace of the Republic" (A/52/370-S/1997/728 dated 19 September 1997).

I would like to recall that previous similar allegations regarding so-called "airspace violations" were rejected in toto in our successive communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 8 September 1997 (A/51/971-S/1997/698 of 9 September 1997). Since the present Greek Cypriot charges are no different or more credible than the ones previously made, they do not merit a detailed reply. I wish to underline once again, however, that flights within the airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State, over which the Greek Cypriot administration in the south has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever.

As I have repeatedly pointed out the endless barrage of such allegations made by the Greek Cypriot administration are designed to uphold the myth that it has sovereignty over the whole island and to cover up its dangerous policy of escalation and tension on the island. In my previous communication on the matter, I have drawn your attention to the fact that, within the framework of the so-called "joint defence doctrine", the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece are planning to stage joint military manoeuvres in and around south Cyprus between 10 and 15 October 1997, and that the provocative military exercises code-named "Nikiforos 97" will involve the participation of the Greek Armed Forces. It is reported by the Greek Cypriot press that the Greek Cypriot Defence Minister, Mr. Eliades, and the Commander of the Greek Cypriot National Guard, General Vorvolakos, have most recently visited Athens to finalize the details concerning the said military exercises (Greek Cypriot daily Agon of 21 September 1997). It has also been confirmed that the Greek Defence Minister, Mr. Cohachopoulos, has accepted the invitation of the Greek Cypriot side and will be present in south Cyprus during the military exercises (Greek Cypriot daily Mahi of 24 September 1997).

In the name of implementing the so-called "joint defence doctrine", the Greek-Greek Cypriot camp will once again create a warlike atmosphere in Cyprus that will only serve to exacerbate the situation on the island as tension is already running high owing to the Greek Cypriot side's decision to deploy the sophisticated S-300 missile system, in contravention of relevant Security Council resolutions. It is noteworthy that as part of "Nikiforos 97", Greek fighter planes will for the first time land at the newly constructed Paphos military airbase. It is reported that the deployment and logistic maintenance of Greek fighter planes at Paphos airbase will significantly increase their operational flight time capacity in the area (Greek Cypriot daily Alithia of 23 September 1997).

The Greek Cypriot side's policy of escalation and tension on the island, coupled with its blatant attempts to undermine the parameters established by the United Nations for a peaceful settlement in Cyprus by using the European Union aspect, are signs that we have entered a critical phase of the Cyprus question. It is imperative that all interested parties impress upon the Greek Cypriot side the need to desist from its reckless policy of escalation and concentrate its efforts towards the finding of a settlement on the basis of bi-communality, bi-zonality and political equality.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLUMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus